THE ADVENTURES OF JOSHER BLUFFEM

He Interviews the Shepherd From Wyoming

"Little Bo-Peep she lost her sheep
"And didn't know where to find 'em.
"Let them alone and they'll come home
"Dragging their tails behind 'em."

I heard somebody singing the classic nursery rhyme as I steered around the corner of the postoffice to get my two patent medicine circulars and a bunch of bills payable, and I looked about me to see who was guilty.

I saw him almost immediately and recognized him, even though he was not armed with a crook—wherever a crook may be except a grafter or second-story man. As a matter of fact, he was armed with a broom, and was busily engaged in sweeping off the postoffice veranda. Something about him suggested sheep, and, first making sure that he should not pull the wool over my eyes, I accosted him.

"Beg pardon," I said politely, "what are you the janitor?"

"No," he replied, uneasily, without looking up, "I'm a sheep herder from Wyoming."

"Huh!" I ejaculated, impolitely.

"Oh—er,—what did I say?" he said, with a startled air."

"You said something about fleecing the public," I precipitated.

"Well, I didn't mean it quite that way," he said apologetically. "I'm the postmaster. Can't you mail your mail?"

"I don't want it," I replied. "If I got it, I might have to pay my bills. I'm Josher Bluffem. I want to interview you."

"Have you got the consent of the Wyoming delegation in congress?" he inquired with an absent-minded air.

"No. What for?" I returned in some astonishment.

"Why, didn't you know," he said—"this postoffice belongs to Wyoming. I'm from Wyoming myself. So's Breckons. Hawaii is a sort of Wyoming preserve, you know."

I didn't, but took it for what it was worth. I have since found out that he was right.

"How do you like postmastering?" I asked.

"Oh, I stand it all right," replied the postmaster, stopping to pick up a piece of string, which he carefully wound around his finger. "You see, I used to herd sheep in Wyoming, so I'm used to being sworn at."

"How did you get your job?" I asked.

"Well, you see, the cattlemen got pretty thick in Wyoming, and I got tired of dodging bullets and escaping lynching bees, so I applied for a federal job, and some of the cattlemen got our congressman to have me appointed postmaster down here to get me out of the way."

A postoffice clerk interrupted our interesting conversation to announce that there was a steamer off Koko Head with mail.

The postmaster stooped down to pick up a pin dropped by some agitated lady, before he said anything. He considered a minute.

"We-ell," he drawled, "it's nearly four o'clock now. I guess we'd better let the mail go until tomorrow. The public can wait. It's used to waiting, you know. What's the hurry, anyhow? Isn't a letter tomorrow just as good as a letter today?"

The postmaster resumed his sweeping and his absent-minded air.

"What is your chief claim to glory, Mr Pratt?" I asked, seeking to get a little real information.

"Why,—er, didn't you know?" he said, starting out of his reverie. "Bonine took my picture while I was shearing sheep at Humuula. So'n you didn't know that I'm an expert sheepshearer, did you? Well, I am. I can shear sheep much better than I can run a postoffice. But that's not saying much. Most anybody can run a postoffice, but it takes a good man to remove the wool from a sheep. The sheep is sometimes particular; the public will stand for anything.

"Of course, the public kicks sometimes. I remember that Governor Frear objected once because we advertised a letter for him, but I think he was unreasonable. The postman had never heard of Walter F. Frear, and I don't know why he should be expected to know everybody in Honolulu. At one time we had to advertise a letter for the editor of the Bulletin because the writer had forgotten to put the street number on it and none of the boys knew where the office was. We did the best we could, sent the letter to the stock yards and the slaughterhouse, but it always came back, so we advertised it." The postmaster carefully picked up a piece of paper somebody had dropped and then resumed his sweeping.

"Do you like being postmaster?" I asked.

"Well, there's more money in it, but I prefer herding sheep in Wyoming. I like solitude. A sheepherder has more time to commune with his soul. Soul communion is my long suit, you know."

While we were talking an indignant citizen rushed up and wanted to know why the ——, ——, —— blazes a letter he had sent to a local man a week before had not been delivered.

I was greatly impressed by the philosophical bearing of the postmaster at this trying juncture.

"Say," he drawled, "there's nothing to get excited over, is there? Your letter will turn up some time; they almost always do. And there's lots of time, isn't there. You've got all the time there is, so just keep cool. I'll tell the clerks to look about the office, and maybe they'll find it somewhere. If they don't, you can write another letter, can't you?"

The indignant citizen excitedly explained that the lost letter had contained much money.

"Serves you right for sending money through the mails," replied the postmaster calmly. "You'll be sending scurrilous matter through the mails next, and then Mr. Hare will get you and turn you over to Mr. Breckons. Breckons comes from the same foreign country I do, Wyoming, and he'll attend to your case. Goodbye."

The indignant citizen, thoroughly squelched, fled through the dust raised by the active broom of the postmaster, and I resumed my questioning.

"What are the qualifications necessary to get a federal job in Hawaii?" I asked.

"Why, one must come from Wyoming, of course?" said Pratt. "What would you suppose? Didn't I come from Wyoming? Didn't Breckons come from Wyoming? Did you come from Wyoming?"

I was forced to admit that I had never been in Wyoming any longer than I could help and that I didn't like mutton, anyway. That seemed to aggrieve Pratt, and he resumed his sweeping with such vigor that three anxious citizens nearly choked to death, and I had to flee the scene of action.

SIDELIGHTS

(Continued from Page Four.)

Before the invitations are issued—and even Mayor Fern could gain points on the plans adopted as to their issuance—care has been taken to notify the resident Japanese Consul that there will be a departure and return. The consul, on papers which no mole can dispute, unless he be a student and able to stand on his head for translation purposes, certifies that the departing man or couple resided within the sacred precincts of the Territory for a given number of years, and should be, by all means, for the benefit of the prosperity thereof, be permitted to return thereto. And when the consulate seal is attached, the festivities begin. Your Japs get as busy as Mott-Smith when the grave risk breaks out amongst the Russians, or the customs authorities when a cache of poi is discovered. A place for the banquet is selected, and invitations are issued, usually verbal. The list comprises relatives and friends, friends of relatives and relatives of friends, and an occasional stranger thrown in for good measure.

The viands are selected with much care. An endeavor is made to get fish which come from Japan by boat, failing which the nearest approach thereto is secured from some Nippon fisherman, and the hosts and guests pretend that they are from Japan, and swam all the way here for the express purpose of gracing the board. The recipe for the soup can not be found anywhere in Mrs. Parloa's culinary dictionary, but perhaps the fluid food is none the worse on that account. And there are queer looking, and odd-tasting cakes, which, for gambling purposes, would beat a bridge game, or McCandless's views on prohibition. They don't taste bad, but their contents are a mystery. And literal lobsters abound, but cooked in a way that they don't taste good unless chop sticks and dipping in soi accompany their consumption. And rice is everywhere; not the mean, squalid, unpatriotic grains grown in these islands, but rice imported from Japan, and so guaranteed.

And the feast is by no means a dry one. What is designated by the Supreme Court of the United States as a light wine, and by the importers as a beer, namely sake, is there in abundance. Proper arrangements have been made for having it reach the exact temperature necessary for its enjoyment and appreciation. Sake vases—I can designate them in no other way—are at hand. And likewise are sake bowls.

The latter are small, but exceedingly numerous, and during the feast, quite busy. For those who have become to a partial extent Americanized, beer in liberal bottles is provided.

I presume Flaubert's barbarian blow-out, described in "Salambo," and Nero's howling kankan, so graphically depicted in "Quo Vadis," had attached to and appurtenant thereunto, features making them more picturesque than the banquets to which I have referred. But neither the acquisition of indigestion from eating flamingo tongues dressed with honey and asafetida, nor the enlargement of the head necessarily incident to holding up your end with the famous Roman fiddler, afforded more temporary pleasure than does one of these farewell Japanese stunts. Of course you can not take in one of the former, and probably would not if you could. But the latter are at hand almost any day, and furnish a pleasant diversion. Furnish yourself with a bunch of liver pills, and take one of them in.

THE BYSTANDER

(Continued from Page Four.)

discovery that if meat scraps were carefully saved and made use of, they would reduce the amount of other meat necessary. The fact that heat was needed for cooking was also familiar to me before this government expert put it into an official document. Reading on further, I discovered his opinion that if in the making of a meat pie raw meat is used, longer cooking is necessary than if cooked meat is used. This, again, confirmed my own views. Let the good work go on. I should like to go to Washington and dig up the senator who is responsible for giving the author of this cook book his job. That senator is an artist in his line. A friend like that is worth having.

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I am not a betting man, but I would like to lay a wager that Teddy Roosevelt will advocate antimilitarism in Germany and be a howling advocate of the house of lords when he strikes the banks and braes of bonny Doone. He will be at The Hague this week; look out for some stirring sentences concerning the beauties of war and the idiocy of mollycoddlers who would settle international disputes by arbitration.

Our Only Hero, hailed by the French press as the Greatest Man in the World, is a wonder when it comes to selecting as speech topics what will attract the greatest attention. I can imagine him mapping out his whole course of procedure for his European trip while he lay awake nights fighting the tsetse flies. He knew that the greatest sensation he could make when he emerged from the jungle would be to decline to talk for publication. Such, he knew, would strike his countrymen as amazingly as Fairbanks going on a fool or Taft turning handsprings down Pennsylvania avenue. People expected him to talk; ergo, he would keep quiet. In Egypt, where the British conquerors are unpopular with the Egptian students, he would tell the students that they must kiss the hand that smites them. In Rome, he could go Fairbanks one better and row, not only with the Pope but the Methodists as well. What went wrong with his plans at Vienna and Budapest is not known. Probably the reporters there are not on to their jobs and missed the points, but he had it properly fixed up for France. There, where the birthrate is the lowest in Europe, he proceeded to bite figurative chunks out of any people guilty of race suicide. Then, turning to the press gallery, filled with the writers for the French press and the French magazines, in which obscenities take the place of wit, he solemnly spoke of the duty of the scribes to work for the ethical development of mankind.

"Locate the man's corn and jump on it," is the Roosevelt motto. He knows the others like to see the squirming.

PEARL HARBOR INCREASE SECURED

(Continued from Page One.)

Mr. Stafford. It in no wise interferes with the established plan?

Mr. Foss of Illinois. No.

Mr. Keifer. Mr. Chairman, it is difficult to understand just what these amendments are by hearing them read. Does this relate to anything but the dry dock at Pearl Harbor?

Mr. Foss of Illinois. The dry dock and the dredging.

Mr. Keifer. Dredging in the channel?

Mr. Foss of Illinois. Yes.

Mr. Keifer. It is simply for the original project?

Mr. Foss of Illinois. Yes.

Mr. Stafford. By increasing the size of the dock a half a million dollars additional was requested by the department, and instead of asking for five hundred thousand they ask for one million dollars.

The Chairman. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The question was taken, and the amendment was agreed to.

L. L. McCandless has purchased from the C. M. Cooke Estate a tract of land at Waimalu. The land acquired by McCandless is 455 acres in extent, and he paid for it the sum of $15,000.

Court Lunalilo, No. 6600, A. O. F., will hold a special meeting on Friday evening, April 29, at seven-thirty o'clock, for the election of candidates.

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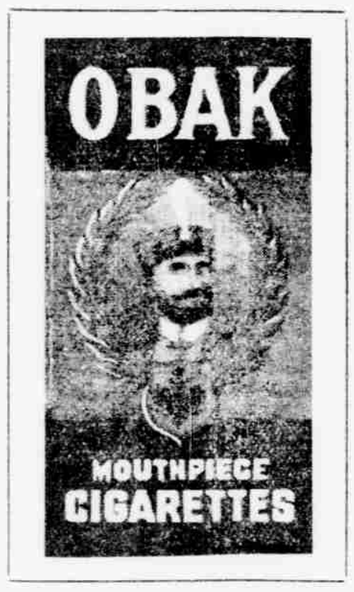

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